

REMARKS

In the last Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 52, 53, 55, 57, 60-62, 67, 69, and 74-77 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,077,288 to Shimomura et al. ("Shimomura"); and rejected claim 63 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shimomura. Applicant acknowledges the Examiner's indication, on page 5 of the Office Action, that claims 58 and 59 contain allowable subject matter, and that claims 79-81 are allowed.

By this Amendment, Applicant amends claims 52 and 59; and cancels claims 58, 67, and 69-73. Accordingly, upon entry of this Amendment, claims 52, 53, 55-57, 59-66, and 74-83 will be pending in this application. Claims 56, 64-66, 78, 82, and 83 were previously withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to a non-elected embodiment. This Amendment does not introduce any new matter.

Applicant respectfully submits that this Amendment places the application in condition for allowance.

Independent claim 52 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter previously recited in claim 58. Thus, in accordance with page 5 of the Office Action, independent claim 52 is in condition for allowance. The dependency of claim 59 has been amended so that claim 59 depends from claim 52, due to the cancellation of claim 58.

Applicant respectfully requests that previously withdrawn claims 56, 64-66, 78, 82, and 83 be rejoined with the elected claims in this application upon entry of Applicant's proposed claim changes. Claims 56, 64-66, 78, 82, and 83 depend either directly or indirectly from amended independent claim 52 and allowed independent

claim 79, and thus, are allowable for at least the same reasons that claims 52 and 79 are allowable. In addition, each of these withdrawn dependent claims recites unique combinations that are neither taught nor suggested by the cited art, and therefore each is also separately patentable.

Applicant respectfully requests that this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be entered by the Examiner, placing claims 52, 53, 55-57, 59-66, and 74-83 in condition for allowance. Applicant submits that the proposed amendments do not raise new issues or necessitate the undertaking of any additional search of the art by the Examiner, since all of the elements and their relationships claimed were either earlier claimed or inherent in the claims as examined. Therefore, this Amendment should allow for immediate action by the Examiner.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that the entry of the amendment would place the application in better form for appeal, should the Examiner dispute the patentability of the pending claims.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant submits that the claims of this application, as amended, are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious in view of the prior art references cited against them. Applicant therefore requests the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration and reexamination of the application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to Deposit Account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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